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Saint Helena

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 19 December 2013. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter of the United Nations administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Representative of administering Power: Governor Mark Capes (October 2011).

Geography: Saint Helena is a small island of volcanic origin situated in the South Atlantic Ocean, approximately 1,900 km from Angola and 2,900 km from Brazil. Ascension lies 1,200 km to the north-west of Saint Helena, and Tristan da Cunha and the other small islands lie approximately 2,400 km to the south of Saint Helena.

Land area: 310 km², consisting of the islands of Saint Helena and Ascension and the Tristan da Cunha group.

Exclusive economic zone: 1,641,294 km².[a]

Population: Saint Helena: 4,214; Ascension: 917; Tristan da Cunha: 265 (November 2012 estimates).

Language: English.

Capital: Jamestown.

Main political parties: None.

Elections: Most recent: July 2013

Legislature: Unicameral legislative assembly (15 seats, 12 elected members).

Gross domestic product per capita: £4,421 (2009/10 estimate).

Economy: Fishing, coffee, tourism, sales of postage stamps. The economy depends on financial assistance from the United Kingdom.

Unemployment rate: 1.8 per cent (2008 population census).

Monetary unit: Saint Helena pound (SHP).

Brief history: The island of Saint Helena was reportedly discovered in 1502 by a Spanish navigator in the service of Portugal and by the end of the sixteenth century had become a port of call for ships en route from Europe to the East Indies. In 1633, it was formally annexed by the Netherlands; however, in 1659 the British East India Company took possession of the island.

[a] Exclusive economic zone data from the "Sea around Us Project", a collaboration between the University of British Columbia and the Pew Environment Group (see www.seaaroundus.org).

I. Constitutional, legal and political developments

1. The current Constitution of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha entered into force in September 2009. The new Constitution changed the name of the Territory from "Saint Helena and its Dependencies" to "Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha", giving the three islands equal status within the Territory. The Head of the Government of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha is the Governor, appointed by the British Crown. However, the ability of the Governor to act inconsistently with the wishes of elected Councillors is curtailed in comparison with the previous Constitution. The British Overseas Territories Act 2002 provides for the granting of British citizenship to "British overseas territory citizens".

2. The Constitution provides for the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, including: protection of the right to life and to personal liberty; protection from inhumane treatment, slavery and forced labour; protection of prisoners; the right to marry, children's rights, freedom of conscience; and the right to education, freedom of expression, assembly and association.

3. The Legislative Council comprises the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, three ex officio members (the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Attorney General) and 12 elected members. The Executive Council, which is presided over by the Governor, consists of the ex officio members and five elected members from the Legislative Council. The ex officio members have no vote in either body.

4. Elections are held by secret ballot, at intervals of not more than four years, by universal suffrage for those aged 18 years and over. The most recent general elections were held on 17 July 2013 and for the first time were based on one constituency. Twelve nominees were duly elected. The Legislative Council met formally on 24 July 2013 and elected the five members of the Executive Council and Chairs for each of the five Council Committees.

5. The 2009 Constitution contains enhanced provisions for ensuring the independence of the judiciary from the legislative and executive organs of the Government. The judicial system comprises a Court of Appeal, a Supreme Court and such subordinate courts (currently a Magistrates' Court and provisions for coroners' enquiries into sudden deaths) as may be established by ordinance. There remains a final appeal to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in prescribed circumstances.

6. In January 2013, following a resolution passed in September 2012 by the Legislative Council, a public consultation process on proposals to adjust the 2009 Constitution was launched. According to the consultation document presented by Governor Capes, the proposed changes would create an environment that promotes the further development of democratic and good governance. Specific proposals relate to three areas: the Executive Council, the Council Committees and the Public Account Committee. The proposals originated from the widely-held belief that the Constitution created a political system that was not conducive to collective leadership and responsibility, clear lines of authority or transparent accountability. Governor Capes noted that the proposed changes did not give the Governor or the Councillors additional powers. Eight public meetings were held during the consultation period, which ended on 25 January 2013. At a consultative poll held on 23 March 2013, the majority opted for not changing the Constitution.

II. Budget

7. Owing to a shrinking tax base due in part to migration and an ageing population, Saint Helena depends heavily on the United Kingdom and other external sources for funding. Budgetary support from the United Kingdom is used to provide essential public services and to subsidize the dedicated shipping service of the Territory. According to the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, Saint Helena is not allowed to borrow funds, in accordance with guidelines from Her Majesty's Treasury. As a consequence, grants from the Department and the European Union are the only resources available.

8. According to information provided by the administering Power, total budgetary aid and shipping support from the Government of the United Kingdom amount to £18.956 million for the 2013-2014 financial year, compared with £19.64 million during the previous period, representing a 3.5 per cent decrease. The 2013-2014 aid package was approved in February 2013, following a visit to Saint Helena by representatives of the Department for International Development. It was decided during that visit that the next three-year budget review would take place in January 2014.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

9. The economy of Saint Helena depends largely on financial assistance from the United Kingdom. Approximately 40 per cent of the labour force works in the Government, and the next largest sector for employment is retail and services. The local population also earns income from fishing, raising livestock and selling handicrafts. Moreover, the labour market strategy for the period 2013-2014, setting up the policy framework, was presented by the Government along with an implementation plan to ensure the achievement of strategic goals throughout 2014. A number of actions in the implementation plan have been achieved, including the establishment of an immigration points-based system and the launch of a local apprenticeship scheme.

10. According to the United Kingdom, a three-year modernization project was completed in 2012. The Government of Saint Helena has continued to press forward with the modernization agenda and has secured the support of a change adviser to build on the work started and to support the implementation of agreed initiatives. These include restructuring, embedding a customer focus in the public services, establishing quality standards and supporting staff development and succession planning.

B. Development

11. Saint Helena is eligible to receive funds from the European Union. On Saint Helena, the funds will be used to build a safer landing facility in Rupert's Bay, which will allow large vessels to dock directly at the wharf for both passenger and freight services, and for road rehabilitation. On Ascension Island, the allocation has been applied to road upgrading. On Tristan da Cunha, the funds will be used for further harbour improvements, the investigation of alternative energy potential,

water works upgrading, waste management, electricity distribution infrastructure and building capacity in the management of the lobster-processing plant.

12. Development aid from the Department for International Development is provided to support a programme of infrastructure improvements, which will be determined every three years, based on priorities agreed with elected members.

13. In February 2009, a disaster management consultant sponsored by the European Union visited Saint Helena to consolidate the work of the island's Disaster Management Committee. Further recommendations are now being carried forward, including the appointment of an experienced disaster management executive. A joint agency disaster management live exercise was conducted in January 2013, the previous one having been held in November 2010.

C. Fisheries and agriculture

14. Fisheries are an important sector of the economy of Saint Helena. According to the United Kingdom, there are 29 fishing boats with commercial licences, but only about 12 of them fish regularly. The local fishermen sell their catch to the Saint Helena Fisheries Corporation. Fish purchases for the first half of the financial year 2013-2014 amounted to 56.55 tons, compared with 131.82 tons during the same period the previous year. One exploratory fishing licence was issued during 2013-2014. All foreign fishing vessels taking up licences to fish are required to have on board a vessel monitoring system as part of the conditions of licence.

15. Saint Helena has developed a reputation for the high quality of its coffee. The island's product is considered one of the finest premium coffees in the world. In 2012-2013, 3,327 kg of Arabica green-tipped Bourbon beans were exported.

16. With regard to farming, at the time of writing of the present document (February 2014), 14,820 ft^2 of polytunnel had been established. In February 2013, a hydroponics unit was commissioned and current yields are promising, particularly for salad crops.

D. Transport and utilities

17. Access to Saint Helena is provided by the *St. Helena*, which serves Saint Helena, Ascension and Cape Town, South Africa. The vessel is already 23 years old, however, and increasingly expensive to operate. The only port, Jamestown, provides good anchorage, although it lacks safe landing facilities that would allow passengers of large cruise vessels to come ashore in all types of weather. It is hoped that the construction of a jetty in Rupert's Bay, combined with air access development, will enable the separation of cargo and passenger operations in the future.

18. The development of an airport is under way. This includes a runway, an apron area, a terminal building and supporting airside and landside facilities. An access road connecting the airport site to the port facilities in Rupert's Bay as well as inshore sea rescue are also requirements under the airport project. The contractual completion date of the project is February 2016. The opportunities enabled by air access should eventually make the island financially independent and not reliant on funding from the United Kingdom and the European Union.

19. The Territory has approximately 168 km of paved roads (Saint Helena: 118 km; Ascension: 40 km; and Tristan da Cunha: 10 km) and 30 km of unpaved roads (Saint Helena: 20 km; and Tristan da Cunha: 10 km).

20. Saint Helena has two local radio stations, as well as satellite television stations rebroadcast terrestrially. Ascension has one local radio station and receives relays of broadcasts from Saint Helena. Broadcasts from the British Forces Broadcasting Service are available, as well as television services for the United States military. Tristan da Cunha has one local radio station and receives television and radio broadcasts from the British Forces Broadcasting Service. On 31 October 2013, there were 1,102 Internet subscribers in Saint Helena and 308 on Ascension Island.

21. Saint Helena has benefited from upgrades to its electricity infrastructure under projects funded by the Department for International Development. The Electricity Distribution Project is now complete, with reliability of the network much improved and all remote properties that had applied for electricity in the process of being connected to the electricity supply. The power station has undergone a midlife refit with four of the six diesel generators being replaced and firm generation capacity increased to accommodate predicted future needs. Remedial work is also under way. In addition, wind power has become a reliable source of energy on Saint Helena and more than 10 per cent of the electricity demand has been supplied by renewable sources in the last two years. The capacity is being doubled, with additional wind turbines on the island and their bases being completed at the time of writing. They are scheduled to be commissioned during 2014. Saint Helena has also invested in some pilot solar schemes which are under evaluation and expected to supply approximately 0.7 per cent of the electricity demand.

22. The Department for International Development has also provided funding for water infrastructure upgrades. A 20-year water resources study has been completed and the ageing water treatment works are being refurbished. The study has also identified work for future years that will be conducted subject to securing funding. The institutional arrangements for the delivery of utility services changed on 1 April 2013, with the Government of Saint Helena divesting the provision of electricity, water and sewage service to a company limited by shares and initially wholly owned by the Government. Following the approval of a solid-waste management strategy in 2012, improved waste management practices should be in place by early 2014 to allow the landfill disposal site to operate in close proximity to the airport. The redevelopment project includes infrastructure to provide for improved landfill operations, mitigation of the attraction of birds to organic waste, the extension of the landfill site lifespan and the creation of a civic recycling facility.

E. Banking and credit

23. In December 2008, new ordinances on financial services and money-laundering came into force, aimed at ensuring that Saint Helena complies with international obligations while safeguarding Saint Helenians from fraudulent financial service providers.

F. Tourism

24. In 2010, the Department for International Development approved £1.2 million for the tourism development project on Saint Helena that finished at the end of the

2012-2013 period. The budget allocated for 2013-2014 builds on the platform created by the 2010 funding.

25. The United Kingdom believes that the new airport is the best way to bring new financial opportunities to the island and promote tourism. With the airport, it is estimated that more than 29,000 tourists will visit the island each year. The rugged natural beauty of the Territory, its rare wildlife and its historic sites, such as Napoleon's tomb, are expected to attract visitors. With the completion of the airport, tourist expenditure on the island may grow from £707,000 in 2009/10 to £9,840,000 in 2021, thus stimulating growth in the wider economy.

IV. Social conditions

A. General

26. Following the reintroduction of the granting of British citizenship to Saint Helenians in 2002, the islands experienced an exodus. The impact of labour emigration is evident in the age-sex characteristics of the resident population which is skewed towards the elderly, with a prominent deficit in the population within the 20-40 age bracket and an associated reduction in the number of young children. Approximately one third of households are headed by women. Of those, approximately 40 per cent are single and less than 20 per cent are married. The 2008 census did not provide an update on the number of children with one or more parents living abroad, but previous figures suggest this to be about 25 per cent. The initiation of the air access project has seen a reversal of the trend, and an increasing number of Saint Helenians are returning to the island to take advantage of improved employment and business development opportunities.

27. Measured by international standards, Saint Helena is a middle-income Territory with few signs of real material poverty. However, according to the Department for International Development, the lack of socioeconomic data remains an acute challenge in understanding poverty, inequality and socioeconomic trends, constraining the development of evidence-based policymaking. A new national strategy for the development of statistics was endorsed by the Economy and Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on 8 March 2012. The strategy provides a framework to underpin the enhancement of the Territory's current statistical system through the establishment and implementation of a cohesive action plan covering the 2013-2015 period.

28. The ageing population of the Territory, with 17.7 per cent over 65 years of age (729 individuals), has created an increasing need for substantial investment in a new elderly care programme. According to the United Kingdom, in April 2011 a new social security ordinance providing for the payment of income-related benefits to the poorest households on the island came into force. The legislation also provides for the introduction of a benefit called the "basic island pension", which is available to people aged 65 and older who are able to demonstrate that they worked a minimum of 20 years on Saint Helena. At the end of October 2013, 621 persons were receiving a basic island pension.

29. The Welfare of Children Ordinance came into force in March 2010. The legislation allocates duties to the Government, courts, parents and other agencies on Saint Helena to ensure that children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted.

It centres on the idea that children are best cared for within their own families; however, it also makes provision for instances when parents and families do not cooperate with statutory bodies. Policies and procedures have been developed for child protection and safeguarding the welfare of children. The legislation fulfils the Territory's obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

30. The Lucy Faithful Foundation conducted a child safety review during a visit to Saint Helena and Ascension in 2013 to assess progress and identify areas for improvement. The review, made available in September 2013, recognized the progress made and identified areas where more remained to be done. For instance, the report pointed out that:

> There were problems relating to premature sexual activity with teenage girls on both islands, some of which was clearly abusive and exploitative. The grooming of girls in their early teenage years by older men was seen as an issue in need of comprehensive attention. Efforts on Ascension Island to curb this trend had proved counterproductive in the short term, as the police methods had alienated some of those they were attempting to assist and protect. Efforts on Saint Helena to deal with the same problem have been more productive.

A number of recommendations were made by the reviewers, including inter alia how to challenge the targeting of girls for sex, the use of the jury system in sexual abuse cases, the use of protocols for investigating sexual crime, the instigation of a treatment regime in prison and the introduction of an initiative called "Circles of support and accountability".

31. There is one general hospital in Jamestown, as well as three health clinics serving people living in rural areas, and two residential units providing care and support for individuals with learning disabilities.

B. Employment

32. The public sector employs about 40 per cent of the workforce. The Government of Saint Helena has been looking at standards of practice in employment in anticipation of the economic changes likely to result from the construction of the airport. Legislation was passed in 2010 with provisions relating to employment and the rights of employees in order to create a framework for the enforcement of such rights. Those rights relate to a written statement of particulars, provision for working time regulations, protection from unfair dismissal, entitlement to unpaid parental leave and unpaid leave to care for dependants, and provision for a minimum wage. A minimum wage for Saint Helena was introduced in June 2013. In addition, the Government has indicated that it intends to enact new legislation to regulate the terms and conditions under which people are employed by businesses and other organizations. The subjects expected to be covered include paid holiday and rest breaks, limits on night work, maternity and paternity pay, redundancy pay and protection from unauthorized deductions from pay, as well as the right to belong or not to belong to a trade union or staff association.

33. Offshore employment has steadily increased and, with it, remittances to the Territory. Approximately one quarter of the island's workforce is employed on

Ascension, in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) or in the United Kingdom. Remittances are processed through the Bank of Saint Helena.

34. The majority of contracts for offshore employment are for unaccompanied workers, resulting in a significant social burden and the dislocation of families. In addition, the loss of trained staff to better-paid offshore employment makes it necessary to bring in a range of internationally recruited staff in a number of sectors. As a result of the construction of the airport, which started in late 2011, the demand for workers increased significantly. A total of 66 Saint Helenians have returned from abroad to work on the project, while 248 have been recruited locally, amounting to a total of 314 islanders employed on the project at the end of November 2013. According to the Department for International Development, in the present situation of nearly full employment, the lack of additional labour force capacity constrains private sector growth. At the same time, evidence of underemployment suggests the potential for economic growth as a result of productivity gains.

C. Education

35. Education is compulsory and free for children between 5 and 16 years of age. There are currently four schools in operation, comprising three all-through primary schools (for pupils aged 3 to 11 years) and one secondary school (for students aged 11 to 18 years). Students over 16 may opt for United Kingdom-accredited academic or vocational courses. Since September 2009, distance-learning opportunities have been included in the curriculum of the secondary school. The Directorate of Education is also responsible for the training and retraining of people in the public and private sectors, through its Adult and Vocational Education Service. Education standards on Saint Helena are beginning to rise after a recent period of gradual decline. In 2013 almost half of all year-11 pupils attained a General Certificate of Secondary Education with a grade C or higher in English and mathematics, and 30 per cent of pupils achieved five or more certificates, including in English and mathematics.

36. Retaining qualified, experienced staff continues to be a challenge. A plan and training are now in place to raise the overall quality of teaching through professional development. The Education Ordinance 2008 improved the legal framework for providing suitable education to children and raised the compulsory schooling age from 15 to 16 years. In 2013, all of the year-11 cohort found employment or remained in training, with almost 40 per cent staying on into the sixth form at Prince Andrew School. Two students entered into higher education in the United Kingdom on courses critical to the future economic needs of the island.

D. Environment

37. Saint Helena has an environmental conservation programme aimed at preserving endangered species and the diversity of habitats. The Government actively pursues compliance with its commitments under the Environment Charter, but resource constraints have impeded progress in some areas.

38. The Overseas Territories Environment Programme, funded jointly by the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth

Office of the Government of the United Kingdom, approved several projects for the Territory in 2011, including three projects for Saint Helena, two for Ascension Island and two for Tristan da Cunha. No project bids were called for in 2012. In late 2013, the island was successful in receiving approval of five bids for funding, totalling £297,217, under the Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus).

39. In January 2014, the Environmental Audit Committee of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom issued a report on sustainability in the United Kingdom overseas territories, in which it identified financial and institutional concerns regarding threats to unique habitats and species and the protection of biodiversity.

40. In its report, the Committee stated that, during its inquiry, the Government of the United Kingdom had expressed general but unspecified aspirations to cherish the environment in the overseas territories, but had been unwilling to acknowledge or to address its responsibilities under United Nations treaties. That was found to be disappointing, because the environment in the overseas territories was globally significant and comprised 90 per cent of the biodiversity for which the Government of the United Kingdom had responsibility. According to the Committee, the Government had failed to negotiate the extension of the Convention on Biological Diversity — the flagship United Nations policy on biodiversity protection — to all the overseas territories and had not ensured the accurate monitoring of biodiversity there. The Committee said that, in environmental terms, the white paper on the overseas territories published in 2012 was considered a missed opportunity.

41. Among the conclusions, the Environmental Audit Committee mentioned that:

(a) In the light of the international significance of the biodiversity in the overseas territories, 13 years was too long a gap between white papers on the overseas territories;

(b) The Government of the United Kingdom was prepared to exercise hard and soft power in relation to financial matters in the overseas territories, but it was apparently not prepared to exercise those powers to protect biodiversity and to promote environmental sustainability;

(c) The four overseas territories to which the Convention on Biological Diversity had been extended (the British Virgin Islands, Gibraltar, Saint Helena and the Cayman Islands) had not been effectively included in biodiversity reporting by the United Kingdom; it was felt that compliance with the stipulations of the Convention was ultimately a responsibility of the Government of the United Kingdom;

(d) Without enhanced monitoring, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom could not accurately report under the Convention on Biological Diversity on the full extent of biodiversity in the overseas territories and therefore measure progress towards the commitment to halt biodiversity loss by 2020.

42. In its report, the Environmental Audit Committee also noted that in the fourth national report under the Convention on Biological Diversity, submitted by the United Kingdom in May 2009, the entry covering Saint Helena referred to neither Ascension nor Tristan da Cunha, to which the Convention has been extended.

Further, it noted that, in its fifth national report, which must be submitted by 31 May 2014, the United Kingdom must include comprehensive entries on biodiversity protection in its overseas territories to which the Convention has been extended, including Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.

V. Ascension

A. Constitutional and political status

43. The 2009 Constitution of the Territory removed the notion that Ascension was a "dependency" of Saint Helena, but the islands remain part of a single territory, sharing a Governor, Attorney General and superior courts.

44. For the first time, the existence of an Island Council is recognized in the Constitution, with detailed provisions to be made by local ordinance. A new Council was elected in February 2011. On 23 September 2013, the Governor announced the dissolution of the Council effective 2 October and called for elections on 31 October 2013.

45. In June 2010, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf denied a claim for a continental shelf area beyond 200 nautical miles submitted by the United Kingdom to the Commission, in respect of Ascension Island, in accordance with the provision set out in article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Commission concluded that the volcanic pinnacle on which Ascension rests was too slender to generate rights to an extended zone of the submerged continental shelf.

B. Economic and social conditions

46. Following a joint meeting between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Ministry of Defence team and the Ascension Island Council regarding the right of abode and property ownership on Ascension, the Government of the United Kingdom announced in January 2006 that there would be no change in its policy and that rights of permanent abode and property ownership would not be granted on Ascension. The issue for the Government of the United Kingdom was one of contingent liabilities that could fall on British taxpayers. Legislation underpinning a land and business policy was enacted in June 2008. It was aimed at providing a clear and transparent means of determining the allocation and use of land, as well as a framework for the operation of businesses on the island.

VI. Tristan da Cunha

A. Constitutional and political status

47. Executive authority for Tristan da Cunha is exercised by the Governor of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. A resident Administrator is appointed by and reports to the Governor. The Administrator is advised by an Island Council, comprising the Administrator, who is President of the Council, eight elected members (including a Chief Islander and at least one woman) and three appointed

members. Elections are held every three years. All registered voters over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Under the 2009 Constitution, the Governor continues to have legislative authority over Tristan da Cunha but, for the first time, is constitutionally required to consult the Island Council before making any laws.

48. Tristan da Cunha has its own legislation, but Saint Helena law applies to the extent that it is not inconsistent with local law, insofar as it is suitable for local circumstances and subject to such modifications as local circumstances make necessary. As a last resort, the laws of England and Wales apply. There are two special constables and one full-time police officer. The Administrator also serves as the Magistrate.

B. Economic and social conditions

49. The economy of Tristan da Cunha is based on traditional subsistence farming and fishing. Rock lobster is sustainably fished and exported to Australia, Japan and the United States of America. A major milestone was finally achieved in July 2013 when the European Union decided that lobster from Tristan da Cunha could now access the market of the European Union.

50. A new lobster plant was completed in July 2009, redressing the hardship caused by the burning of the plant the previous year. A new crane arrived on the island in 2011, funded by the European Development Fund, making repairs to the harbour wall possible.

51. Access to Tristan da Cunha is only by sea and is provided primarily by two vessels operated by the South African company Ovenstone, which holds the fishing concession for Tristan da Cunha lobster, and by the *S.A. Agulhas II*, a research vessel that services a South African weather station on Gough Island once a year. Between them, they visit Tristan da Cunha eight times a year, operating a passenger and freight service. The journey between Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha takes about seven days. Tourism from occasional passing cruise ships and the sale of commemorative coins and stamps also bring the island significant income. Government income from those sectors is used to fund health, education and other government services. In 2009/10, the Government of the United Kingdom funded the construction of a post office/museum and a police station on the island. The post office/museum hosts a number of tourism services, which generate additional income for the island.

52. The harbour can be used only when weather and sea conditions are favourable, which is about 60 days a year, and cruise ships are often unable to land passengers. The harbour is not deep enough for visiting ships and is vulnerable to sea storms. Emergency repairs funded by the Government of the United Kingdom were carried out between February and April 2011. Since then, the European Development Fund has supported routine annual maintenance such as casting new dolosse. The Administration of Tristan da Cunha, supported by the Government of the United Kingdom, is exploring long-term options to reinforce or redesign the harbour.

53. Following the installation of an improved telephone network early in 2007, Tristan da Cunha enjoys improved telecommunications. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office funds the line rental charge for the service. Telephone services are reliable and available to all households. Further improvements to the

island's telecommunications were made in 2011 and 2012. Internet access is now available to the community through an Internet cafe and a Wi-Fi system.

54. In 2009, the Island Council set out broad strategies to secure the island's financial future. According to the United Kingdom, even with such reforms, the island would very soon become insolvent, unless further drastic measures continued to be taken. In 2011, a thorough review of budgets was undertaken and strict rules on procurement and expenditure were introduced. Increased income from a new fishing licence agreement negotiated in 2009/10 and improved sales in other income streams have also helped. As a result, the island forecast a surplus of revenue over expenditure in 2011, 2012 and 2013. According to the administering Power, external financial assistance with infrastructure projects continues to be needed. Funds from the European Union (through the tenth European Development Fund) came on stream in 2011. Projects included upgrades to the electrical reticulation system, the improvement of the quality of the water supply, an improved waste management system, routine harbour maintenance and a pilot project for renewable energy.

55. The Department for International Development funds the position of a resident doctor. In order to build capacity on the island, it also funds the positions of a clinical nurse, the Chief Executive Officer, the Education Adviser and the Director of Public Works. The Department also sponsors annual dental and biennial optometrist visits. It has been a number of years since Tristanians had access to off-island training, but, since 2012, the Department has also funded training both on and off the island (the latter in the Isle of Man and South Africa). This training has been provided across the Tristan Administration and covered the following areas: fisheries, tourism, post office services, public works, communications and information technology.

56. Pupils leave school at the age of 16 and tend to work in the Government or the fishing sector. They have no opportunity to proceed to higher education unless they go abroad. The school has two students studying higher education in South Africa. The current staff members are, by their own admission, poorly trained. There are now two trainee teachers in the pipeline. In September 2009, an education adviser sponsored by the Department for International Development began a two year posting on the island, during which he delivered training to local teachers. In June 2013, a subsequent Education Adviser arrived as a replacement. The post has been extended to 2015.

C. Environment

57. Tristan da Cunha is successfully implementing a number of conservation projects, with help from its partners, including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The Overseas Territory Environmental Programme projects include efforts to remove invasive species from uninhabited islands in the Tristan da Cunha group and studies on the feasibility of eradicating rodents. Tristan da Cunha also has a biodiversity action plan to help it meet its commitments under the relevant Convention. This was updated in 2012 to cover a five-year period, until 2017.

58. According to the United Kingdom, in March 2011 a bulk carrier ran aground on Nightingale, spilling 1,600 tons of fuel and 65,000 tons of soya. Penguins on both Nightingale and Inaccessible — a World Heritage Site — were affected, and the fisheries on both islands were closed for two years, but reopened in 2013.

VII. Relations with international organizations and partners

59. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha are associated with, but not part of, the European Union. The Territory is a member of the South Atlantic Territories Cooperation Forum.

60. Since January 2014, the Territory has been a partner of the European Union under Council decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of overseas countries and territories with the European Union, approved, inter alia, in an effort to move away from a classic development cooperation approach to a reciprocal partnership that promotes sustainable development and the values and standards of the European Union in the wider world.

VIII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

61. Information on political and constitutional developments regarding the status of Saint Helena is reflected in section I above.

B. Position of the administering Power

62. On 11 October 2013, at the 7th meeting of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the relationship of the Government of the United Kingdom with its overseas territories was modern and based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each territory to determine whether to remain British. Should the people of a territory choose to remain British, the United Kingdom would maintain and deepen its special relationship with them.

63. He went on to say that, since the publication in June 2012 by the Government of the United Kingdom of a white paper entitled *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability*, the United Kingdom had been working closely with the territories to develop that partnership further. His Government had a fundamental responsibility to ensure the security and good governance of its overseas territories. The United Kingdom had strengthened the annual meeting with territory leaders into a Joint Ministerial Council and had given it a clear mandate to lead work to review and implement the strategy and the commitments set out in the White Paper (see A/C.4/68/SR.7).

64. At the second meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, held in London on 26 November 2013, the United Kingdom and overseas territory leaders agreed upon a communiqué that included the following passage setting out the joint position of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories on self-determination:

> We reiterate our commitment to continuing to build a modern relationship based on partnership, shared values and the principle of self-determination. The people of each territory have the right to choose whether or not their

territory should remain a British overseas territory or to seek an alternative future.

...

The right of self-determination is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that the people of all overseas territories have a right to determine their own futures, to decide on the path they wish to take and to maintain freely their constitutional link with the United Kingdom if that is their choice. Being a British territory entails a balance of benefits and responsibilities. We affirm a commitment to shared values, high standards of governance and building a stronger partnership. Any decision to break the constitutional link should be on the basis of the clear and constitutionally expressed wish of the people of the Territory. We believe that the United Nations Decolonization Committee should delist territories where this is their wish.

Each Territory is unique and has its own constitution. We will continue work to complete the process of constitutional modernizations so that territories have the greatest self-government possible.

IX. Action by the General Assembly

65. On 11 December 2013, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolutions 68/95 A and B on the basis of the report of the Special Committee (A/68/23) and the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. Section IX of resolution 68/95 B concerns Saint Helena. In the operative paragraphs of that section, the General Assembly:

1. *Stresses* the importance of the Territory's 2009 Constitution, and takes note of proposals to promote the further development of democratic and good governance;

2. *Requests* the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard calls upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

3. *Requests* the administering Power and relevant international organizations to continue to support the efforts of the territorial Government to address the Territory's socioeconomic development challenges;

4. *Calls upon* the administering Power to take into account the unique geographical character of Saint Helena while resolving any emerging issues related to the construction of the airport.